

WORKING WITH DIRECTORS

“The one thing I do know about directors is that the majority of the time, on a movie set, the director is the person...[who] has been on the least number of movie sets.”

—Samuel L. Jackson

SUBCHAPTERS

- Show Up With Too Much
- The Three Kinds of Directors
- Learn Your Director's Goals
- Resist the Need for External Validation
- The Director Isn't Always Right
- Learn From Good Directors

CHAPTER REVIEW

Sam describes two methods of nurturing a solid actor–director relationship. The first is to make an effort to communicate and harmonize your choices about your character with the director's overall vision and goal for the story. The second is to prove to the director that you're invested in the film as an ensemble effort, not just in your own performance.

When the director gives you thoughtful notes on your performance, use them as an opportunity to learn and build trust. If the director doesn't give you notes, don't go looking for them—it means you're giving them what they want.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Sam and Quentin Tarantino are longtime collaborators. Read up on the films they've done together such as *Pulp Fiction*, *The Hateful Eight*, and *Django Unchained*, and learn how they continue to nurture a professional relationship that extends nearly twenty-five years.
- Think of three of your favorite films. Who directed them? Out of the three types of directors Sam names, which do you think applies to the director(s) of these films? Research them to learn how they work with actors to create a film you admire.

12.

WORKING WITH DIRECTORS

ASSIGNMENT

- Try running a scene with a partner, taking turns giving direction. As director, begin with a clear vision of how you want your actor to perform, and do your best to communicate clearly with them about their goals, stakes, and status. When you're the actor, also begin with a clear vision of who you want your character to be, then harmonize your expectations with the director's. If your director gives you a confusing or contradictory note, let them know, and ask to try it another way. If the actor doesn't seem to change in their performance, talk about why. At the end, discuss your individual choices and why you think they work. If you want to go all-out, record the exercise and share the results in [The Hub](#).

13.

NOTES